



What should employers expect from a recruitment consultant /agency?

Companies recruiting will often ask themselves when engaging with a construction sales recruitment consultant or agency: “What exactly are they doing for me rather than for their own self-interest” and “What am I actually getting for our hard-earned money?”

Although many companies would agree that the recruitment process doesn't always get the attention it deserves, as it can be seen as a distraction from the "more important" day-to-day running of the business, most realise that selecting the right person is vital for the future success of their business.

However, companies are understandably apprehensive about using a recruitment agency. Many will still ask themselves, “why am I using a recruitment agency?” and “what should I expect from my consultant?” So if you are currently in this mindset, consider the following to help evaluate if you are receiving a good service from your consultant.

At Pinnacle Consulting we are only too aware of the need to operate with professionalism and integrity, otherwise that important trust factor is quickly lost

with both our clients and candidates.

Here are six simple things that you should be asking of your consultant. These are also the basic principles we look to instil into our consultants.

1. Is my consultant demonstrating a thorough understanding of my brief, our market and our company?

If your recruitment agency and consultant really understand your business they will confidently and effectively explain the benefits of matching your company with the candidate and how the job fits in with your company's objectives. Behind the scenes, this understanding will also assist the consultant when selecting appropriate applicants for interview.

So, check to see if your consultant has a sound understanding and knowledge of your company, your products and services, your markets and customers, as well as your activity, approach and reasons for needing to employ. Does your consultant ask you additional questions to enhance the knowledge they have already proven, or are they just making generalised, vague statements?



More importantly, are the prospective candidates being put forward by your consultant actually matching your brief and are they supported with good, intelligent rationale to support their selection?

Understanding your industry is often solved by using a specialist recruitment agency that operates exclusively in your field, but a consultant who also understands your specific company, provides you with a much more valuable service.

2. Is my consultant providing the right level and quality of communication?

You need to make sure that you are being updated on progress, but not to the extent where you don't want to talk to the consultant and calls become 'sales' pitches. Conversations and meetings should be proactive, reassuring and informative, and that of a business partner working for mutual benefit.

3. Are the CVs being sent to me carefully selected or is my consultant just a CV forwarder?

If you, very quickly, get sent through a ream of CVs which seem to have been generated by the consultant doing a quick automated CV match, or by haphazardly trawling through various job boards, then you should be concerned. First of all, you should ask for a share of the commission fee, as it seems you are being asked to do the main filtering on behalf of the consultant. Secondly, it would be very likely that none of the candidates have been spoken to about the role, or the detail of their career truly evaluated by the consultant to ensure they are suitable and match the key aspects of your brief.

Your consultant must provide you with process streamlining benefits to ensure that CVs sent to you are relevant and the candidates of a high quality, capable and interested in the role. Less is often more, so look for quality over quantity and evidence that the consultant knows the person behind the words on the CV. Never assume that they have actually spoken to the person they are putting forward, but look for evidence that they have.

4. Are they saving me time, rather than wasting my time?

One of the main reasons companies decide to use agencies for their recruitment is to save advertising expenditure and time spent searching, evaluating, communicating and administrating. In other words, sorting the wheat from the chaff and thus allowing you to concentrate on your own job.

If you are finding yourself spending too much of your time monitoring your consultant's activity and guiding them in the right direction, or as mentioned earlier,

having to look through a huge pile of CVs which are without substance - then you may as well have controlled the whole process yourself in the first place. You only want to interview top quality people, who are serious candidates for job, and those who will actually turn up for the interview in the first place.

If your consultant has a true understanding of your needs and has established this during briefing - a stage when the employer and the consultant really do need to invest their time - then you can move forward with confidence that the process is likely to go smoothly and without the constant need to eat into your time, other than when it is necessary.

5. Is my consultant exploring all avenues to find the ideal candidate to match my brief?

A good consultant will earn their fee by finding the right person for the right job by selecting from a pool of high quality candidates, including access to candidates not available elsewhere.

Job boards and media advertising are open to anyone looking for candidates, and are often a successful way to fill a position, but there are also the hidden ones - those who are not even aware that they are looking for a job, or at least, are not actively seeking. It is also true that high quality candidates will not be searching for long, and many active candidates will not even read the agency listings or visit job boards.

A proactive approach from a consultant with specialist and intimate knowledge of those within the industry who might be tempted to make a move, could be the key-determining factor to find you the elite employees that meet and exceed your brief and will grow your business.

These qualities are vital ingredients of a high quality recruitment agency and consultant, and a key reason for not handling the recruitment process internally.

Your consultant must really work for you to meet your needs and not just take the easy routes accessible to everyone. Ask them how they intend to find someone to meet your requirements.

It is vital that you don't fill a position with the best of a bad bunch, crossing your fingers that it will work out - it is rare that it does. By using a consultant, you have hired a specialist and professional service, so it is not unreasonable to expect good results.

6. Is your consultant also working in the best interests of the candidate and do I trust them?

A good consultant should intuitively know their

clients' and candidates' needs and this should be achieved by really getting to know people.

They should look to build long-term relationships for long-term gain. It should not just be about filling a vacancy that would not be fair on either the candidate or the client.

Your consultant should be sure that it is the right move for the candidate because, if it isn't, then it certainly is not the right appointment for you. You need to trust that your consultant has the best interests of both in their approach. You can normally judge this through your relationship with them - if that is sound and honest, it is likely that the same will be the case with candidates.

An excellent consultant will also be able to identify talent and potential in people to make them ideal candidates for roles that they would not normally have even considered. This can often provide amazing results, and is proof of a consultant thinking carefully about your brief and knowing people well.



It is a good sign if your consultant continues to take an interest in your company and how things are going even after the appointment is made, and also if they are happy to give you specialist and confidential advice whether or not you are in recruiting mode. However, as mentioned earlier, they should not be a hindrance.

Further guidance

Pinnacle Consulting is a leading sales and marketing recruitment agency operating exclusively in the building products sector.

If you are an employer looking to recruit, please call us to discuss your requirements on **01480 405225** or us at email recruit@pinnacleconsulting.co.uk.

If you would like to discuss a sales or marketing career in the Building Products Industry, you may wish to attend one of our PinBuild Career Development Clinics or arrange a Skype consultation.



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